

PEARL'S SECRET



BY MRS HOWARD TAYLOR
CHINA INLAND MISSION



PEACHBLOSSOM IN THE GARDEN BEHIND THE HOSPITAL

Frontispiece

PEARL'S SECRET

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CHAPTER 1

THE HOME SHE CAME TO

PEARL was her Chinese name, and it was in 1910 that she came to be the sunshine of her home near the Yellow River. She had an English name as well, for she was a little "foreign" girl with brown, wavy hair and deep blue eyes. Her father was a doctor, and behind the busy courtyards of the Mission hospital there was a garden, shady in summer with the trees he had planted. There the children loved to play under the willows or among the roses. For Pearl was not alone. Joy and Victor were her sister and brother, and they had companions of their own ages in another missionary family on the compound.

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The garden might have seemed to other eyes somewhat parched and sandy, and the country round it almost desert-like, especially after one of the dust-storms so common in that part of China. But to the children the drifting sand carried down by the mighty river had a charm of its own. It was almost as good as the sea-shore for digging and playing in, and they loved to go on donkeys where the dunes lay deep, and slide down the tempting slopes or picnic in the sun. Then in winter when the wide lagoons inside the city were frozen, the sand-hills were a help in finding quiet places where they could sledge and slide to their hearts' content. For instead of going in by the South Gate near the hospital, which would have meant being followed by ever-increasing crowds, they could make their way unobserved, outside the city, to where the sand had drifted into hills so high that from them they could easily gain the top of the wall. There were guard-houses of course, but they

The Home she came to

were generally empty, and it was fine to scale the wall and take the city all unknown and find themselves on the quiet side of the frozen lakes. They could picnic in the guard-houses, out of sight, and make a fire to boil water and even cook potatoes ; and by the time people crowded round in any number, they had had their fun and were ready to go home.

Then the great city itself with its shops of all sorts and sizes was an endless interest to the children. They loved to thread their way through its busy streets, holding Father's hand, and to go with Mother to visit her Chinese friends, especially if invited for a feast. They loved the stories, too, that Father told about the early days when he first came to Kai-feng, and there was no hospital in or near the city and no missionary family. One brave man was living there alone—the first and only foreigner to succeed in settling among its proud and at that time unfriendly inhabitants. His life had often been in

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danger, but he would rather have been killed in a riot, had it come to that, than leave those multitudes of people any longer without the glad tidings of Salvation.

Those were difficult days in which to live and preach Christ in inland China, and before Father came to join the lonely missionary he, too, had been through terrible times in the Boxer crisis of 1900. He probably never told the children the worst of those experiences, but they heard enough to realise how near death Father and his friends had been, and how wonderfully God had cared for them.

When the riots came it was impossible to escape from their beleaguered house save over a high wall, and they were none too welcome in the neighbour's premises. He hid them, however, in an attic, to which they had to climb by means of a pile of grain just under the trap-door. This may sound fairly safe as a hiding-place, but there were windows to the attic that had no shutters. Anybody could look in, as in-

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deed the rioters did—crowding the courtyard below, the roof above and the roofs of neighbouring houses. The fugitives had with them, also, a baby of a few weeks old, whose crying might at any time have betrayed their whereabouts. Yet in those days and nights of danger, for they were twelve days hiding in that attic, they were so covered by the protecting hand of God that no one found them. The soldiers, searching everywhere to kill them, came to the very spot, but though one man tried the trap-door on which Father was sitting at the time they did not come up, and the baby never cried.

About the fourth day, at noon, they were eating a little food that had been brought them when a head appeared at the trap-door and some one cried :

“ Escape ! Escape for your lives ! They are coming to search the place.”

It was the work of a few moments to drop down upon the heap of grain, rush into the courtyard and climb back into the

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ruins of their old home. There in the burning sunshine they sat close up under the wall, hoping and praying that no one would look over. They heard the soldiers come and ransack the house they had just left, and waited silently for what might happen next. For a moment Father feared the worst, for looking up he saw a man come to the wall above them. Were they discovered? Had he passed on the word? Young and strong and with all life before them, were they to fall a prey to the cruel swords of those angry soldiers? How easily it might have been! but God had more work for them to do in China, and His watchful care did not fail. The man dropped down beside them.

“Come back: they are gone,” he said.
“I will help you over.”

And so, in all the desperate moments that came, they were protected. When their first friend could hide them no longer and they had to move to other quarters, the Lord Himself sheltered them in their flight.

The Home she came to

“I cannot keep you,” their friend had said. “It is known that you are here. I must send you away to-night.” And they had no idea how or where they were going.

All they could do was to pray for rain, because that would clear the streets and keep people indoors. There were two ladies, two men, and the baby—a party easily recognisable, as some of them were tall. But prayer was wonderfully answered—the rain came down in torrents. When they left the attic and appeared in the courtyard they hardly knew what was happening. They were seized by a number of rough excited men, separated from one another, and hurried out into the darkness. Chinese garments had been thrown over their heads—they were wearing Chinese dress—and they found themselves splashing through mud and rain in the hands of their captors. The shops were lighted on either side of the streets, but no one seemed to notice the passers-

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by. Wondering whether they had been betrayed to their enemies or not, they stumbled on, until they were hurried down a narrow passage, into a dark room, and up a ladder-like stair. How long the time seemed as they waited—first one, then two, then three together—waited for the rest ! Even the baby had been snatched out of the mother's arms and carried off alone into the darkness. But all was well. The men were friendly as it proved, and by one route or another brought all the party safely to their new hiding-place.

Five days later their first friend managed at the risk of his own life to get them out of the city. He smuggled them on to a little boat, with what hairbreadth escapes Father would sometimes tell ; and then there was the journey of thirteen days to Hankow, the nearest place of safety.

Mother, too, had come through terrible experiences, though at that time she was not "Mother," and had only just reached China. From her Swedish home she had

The Home she came to

come out as a young missionary at the beginning of that fateful year, 1900. It was a long journey to the station at which she was to work, and on the way her birthday was spent at an inland city called Paotingfu. The missionaries were very kind, and she greatly enjoyed being with them, little thinking that that very summer almost all of them would lay down their lives for Jesus' sake.

Through the disturbed country, seething with the troubles so soon to break out, Mother travelled on to her station, a two-months' journey from Shanghai. Hardly had she settled down before it was necessary to leave again. Foreigners had all to fly for their lives, and the Swedish missionaries took the southern route which brought them over the mountains to the same Han River by which Father was to reach Hankow.

They did not meet each other, but going down the river Mother heard of the missionaries who had been rioted in

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Honan, and of whom no further tidings had been received. Twenty days and more had elapsed since the riot, but nobody knew whether they were living or dead. The mission-house at Hankow was full when Mother's party arrived, and she soon went on by river-steamer to Shanghai, but—strangely enough—as she left the front entrance Father came in at the back. Thin and tired after those long weeks of suffering and suspense, unwashed almost, unshaven, with no garments save those they had worn night and day through all their hiding, he and his companions had reached a place of safety at last. Mother did not see him, and he little knew who had left the premises just as he entered. They met in Shanghai, however, a few days later, and that was the beginning of the love that made the home to which Pearl had come, far away in the heart of China.

CHAPTER II

A SUNBEAM

SUNBEAMS are wanted most in dreary weather, and that was just when Pearl began her shining. When she was only six weeks old her brother and sister had to leave home and take the long journey across Siberia and Russia to Sweden. This had been decided upon months before, and a loved relative of their mother's had come all those thousands of miles to fetch them, but the parting was hard none the less when they reached the coast and Father and Mother could go no farther with their little travellers. Pearl was not there. She had been left at home. When the long train with its powerful engine moved out of the station and Mother saw

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her darlings carried right away—Joy was only four at the time and Victor two—her heart seemed turned to stone. Tears, even, would not come. Silently she travelled back with Father to their empty home. And there was Pearl awaiting them—sweetest and sunniest of babies! Her mission as a sunbeam had begun.

Those were busy days in the hospital near the Yellow River. It was the only hospital in Kai-feng, capital of a province (Honan) larger than the whole of England and quite as populous. Very few missionary doctors had as yet come to Honan, so that Father and his colleague had a big job on their hands. But they were young; both had brave helpers in their wives; and the Master who had sent them was with them, which made the busy days full of hope and happiness.

From far and near the patients came—and often with what weird tumours and troubles! Some had spent much on Chinese doctors and in worshipping at

A Sunbeam

famous shrines. Some had suffered many things in seeking to be healed : but needles run into the eye to lessen inflammation, and burns and cuttings inflicted with more zeal than knowledge often made matters worse instead of better.

How grateful the poor young tailor was, for example, whom Father had rescued when he first came to China. He had accidentally swallowed a needle with a strong thread attached to it. The needle had gone down head first, but the thread was long enough to get hold of, so of course they tried to pull it out. The more they pulled the more the point of the needle stuck in his throat, far down, and as the throat swelled, and they grew more and more excited, he was almost frightened to death. It had gone on some time, and there seemed no hope of getting the needle out. If the man died, his employer would have the expense and annoyance of burying him, and his spirit would haunt the place and trouble his fellow-workmen.

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This was what made them angry, and so frightened the neighbours that all the street was upset.

As a last resort, some one suggested the foreigner, and Father was called across the river to see if anything could be done. The thread was still there, and a fellow-missionary had a fine but strong india-rubber tube. Quietly they set about tying more thread to the piece that was hanging from the man's mouth ; then Father slipped the tube over it, passed it carefully down the poor swollen throat until the needle's head was reached, and just pushed the needle down till in a wider space it had room to turn round. So easily was it done that the excited on-lookers hardly knew what was happening until, to their astonishment, the needle was drawn out. Then wonder and surprise knew no bounds, and the doctor's fame spread all over the neighbourhood. Better still, the poor man's life was saved, and he heard for the first time the message of Redeeming Love.

A Sunbeam

Many a story might be told of the wonders wrought in the hospital in those days, when it was the only place where people could get skilled help, surgically at any rate. From morning to night the doctors were at work, out-patients and in-patients overflowing both the men's and women's courtyards. There was no lady-doctor, as yet, to undertake the women's department, but the doctors' wives took turn-about in helping their husbands. In the waiting-room, crowded to overflowing, they spent long hours talking with the patients, hearing about their troubles, and bringing home to their hearts the comfort of the love of Jesus. Pictures and hymn-singing were an unfailing interest, and if ladies came who were stiff and frightened, Mother would send for her baby, whose sunny smiles banished all shyness.

What a help the children were in making friends with all classes ! Both the doctors' wives had young families, and both knew how to use that precious talent in the

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service of the Master. When the railway was first opened, with its station near the hospital, the ladies of the great city used to go out in numbers to see the strange new sight. Private carts with their handsome mules and trappings passed near the hospital continually, and having seen the foreign carriages "that could run by themselves" (*i.e.* without horse or mule) the ladies often ordered their servants to drive to the foreign houses. When the carts stopped at the gate of the hospital there was always a cordial welcome, and their occupants were directed to one or other of the doctor's homes. Then the gaily-dressed and painted visitors, like gorgeous butterflies, would make their way across the garden by paths among the trees, supported on their tiny feet each by her woman-servant. The attractions of a foreign drawing-room with pictures, organ, and tea-table were absorbing for a time, but in reaching their hearts proved as nothing compared with the attractions

A Sunbeam

of the foreign baby, who smiled at them with wondering eyes. Many of these visitors, whose lives were just as empty as those of the poorest patients, listened with interest to the wonderful message of the Gospel. Some came again and again, finding rest of heart through faith in Jesus.

“What do you do all day long?” Mother once asked a gorgeously-dressed young Manchu lady.

“Oh, that is easily told,” she answered. “I just do three things—sleep, play cards, and pay visits.”

But her heart was not satisfied; and a little later she came back, quietly dressed and with only one companion.

“I could not speak with you the other day as I wanted to,” she said, “there were so many visitors. But now, please tell me all about this doctrine, because,” and she laid her hand on Mother’s, “I, too, want to go to heaven.”

But it was not only in the hospital and at home that Father and Mother were

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busy ; there was the Church in the city that claimed their help. A wonderful thing had happened there which had brought great joy to their hearts. One Sunday morning, after the hospital had been opened about two years, a Chinese Christian was leading the service. As he was preaching he began to tell of something in his own life that was wrong and that he was very sorry for. He had escorted some missionaries down to the coast, and they had given him a rug to use on the way back and hand over to their friends in the city. This rug he had kept as his own, thinking it would never be asked for. But of late he and others in the Church had been praying for blessing. They felt the deadness and coldness of their lives and longed to be filled with the Holy Spirit like the disciples at Pentecost. They had attended some meetings north of the Yellow River, in which they saw Chinese people like themselves filled with joy and power. Oh, if only they could be Christians like

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that ! If only *their* lives were lives of victory, so that people who heard them tell of Jesus would really be converted.

“ But what about the rug ? ” a voice seemed to say in his heart. “ What about your secret sin ? ”

That Sunday morning he could bear it no longer. Calling to a friend at the other end of the chapel, he said :

“ Will you help me to confess a sin ? ”

His friend walked up the chapel carrying the rug.

“ Please take it,” said the preacher when he had told the story, “ and hand it to our Pastor’s wife. I hope she will forgive me.”

Immediately, in all parts of the hall, men and women were stricken with an overwhelming sense of sin before God. The whole audience fell on their knees—many on their faces—weeping and confessing things that the Holy Spirit showed them in their own lives. There was no sermon that morning ; no one led the

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meeting ; but a wonderful work was done in breaking down coldness and pride and false pretences and making room for the Lord Jesus in all His saving power. Father and Mother were there, and were awed at seeing an out-pouring of the Holy Spirit such as they had never witnessed before. For days and weeks the wonderful work went on, “ and there was much joy in the city.” Meetings were held afternoon and evening, not led by any one person, but in which everybody was so full of joy and praise that the singing and prayers and speaking just flowed on, and the only difficulty was to stop. The chapel at the hospital, too, was crowded. The students and servants did not have to be asked to go to the meetings, nor the patients either. All who were well enough were eager to be there, and everybody hurried through their work so as not to miss a moment of that evening hour.

All this made the missionaries very busy. Patients were converted in the hospital,

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hearers were converted in the city, and Mother wanted to give all the time possible to teaching and visiting among the women. When springtime came, and the hospital courtyard began to fill with carts and barrows from near and far, it was no easy matter to get through all there was to be done. They seemed to live in a whirlwind of work those days, seeing often two hundred patients a day, or doing forty to fifty operations. Mother would come back from the city many a time in the twilight, tired after hours of visiting—and oh, the joy it was to see the lighted nursery and forget all else in the smiling happiness of her baby!

When Pearl was a year old the time came for a family reunion. Father and Mother were going home on furlough, and the weariness of the trans-Siberian railway was beguiled for others besides themselves by the gaiety of this little traveller.

“Elle saute, elle saute!” cried the

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French lady, who found it hard to keep the dancing figure on her knee.

And when the children were all together again, running free upon the seashore, or in the field and lanes in the depths of an English spring, the little one began to thrive as never before. She developed a fondness for singing, and in meetings on the sands of the Children's Special Service Mission picked up tunes and words that caught her fancy. And how she remembered them! Six months later—sitting in her p'ram. in the beautiful parks of Stockholm while the others played in the snow—she used to sing with radiant happiness :

Jesus knows all about our troubles,
or

A little talk with Jesus makes it right, all right.

A second summer was spent at Newquay with three families of cousins, and great times the children had, bathing and paddling, climbing the wonderful rocks and picnicking on the sands. Then partings

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had to come again, and long good-byes were said as Father and Mother turned their faces once more to China. Joy and Pearl went with them, but Victor, who had suffered more from the climate, was left with relatives in Sweden. A happy home was provided for him and the care of an English governess, but the parents sorely missed their only son.

The journey could not but be interesting, however, and the little girls enjoyed it even more than their elders. Joy's birthday was spent in Petrograd, and Pearl was caught in the Winter Palace running with delight up the red velvet carpet and climbing the very steps to the golden throne of the Czars.

But nothing equalled the joys of their own garden where the trees had grown so tall—for it was home. And how glad the hospital was to have them back again !

CHAPTER III

THREE HAPPY YEARS

QUICKLY the time slipped by while Pearl was growing from two and a half to five years old. It had never been intended that she and Joy should be so long without their brother; but in the summer of 1914, just as Victor was to have come home, the war broke out, and travelling from Sweden was impossible.

That summer Joy and Pearl were up in the hills at a beautiful place called Kuling, with their father and mother. There were many other children there in scattered bungalows among the trees, and there were lovely bathing-pools and waterfalls and places with swings and see-saws, some of which went flying round as well as up and



LOOKING AT A PICTURE BOOK

Pearl, five years old

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Three Happy Years

down. But amid all their games and picnics the little girls did not forget the sad and terrible happenings far away. "O Lord, please help the war to cease," was Pearl's daily prayer, and it came from her heart.

It was not long after that summer, when the sisters were at home again, that the great event of their lives took place. How they had looked forward to it! But as it drew near they were not without misgivings. Boys are so different from girls! They had seen a good many at Kuling, and, well—perhaps they were not always kind. Would he tease them, this brother who had been away for years? They remembered him but faintly. Would he be big and strong and up to lots of fun? It was with eager expectation they waited to see.

And what a day of rejoicing it was when Victor arrived with the young English lady who had been with him in Sweden! Father had gone to the station to meet

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them and brought home his boy in triumph, amid the congratulations of all the compound. How well and jolly he looked in his reefer coat and sailor suit ! But strange to say, Joy and Pearl were overcome with shyness at first and would not let him kiss them. It was not long, however, before the shyness passed away and they were overcome with laughter ; for Victor actually talked Swedish as well as English, and had forgotten Chinese. It was so strange to hear him chatting with Mother in a language nobody else could understand ! But alas, Victor took a fit of shyness too, when his sisters laughed at him, and could not be persuaded to talk any more in that beautiful northern tongue.

Three happy, perfect years followed of united family life. Joy and Pearl had each a companion nearer their own age, for Victor came between them, and to Father and Mother it was a constant delight to

Three Happy Years

see them all together. Pearl was just as lively as she was loving, and the trio were up to all sorts of pranks, but what a relief that was to the busy doctor coming back from the wards and to Mother after long hours in the city ! For while the trees in the garden had been growing and the children had been growing, the work of the hospital had grown most of all. Father's colleague—the brave, strong man who had begun it with him, and who had carried it alone through the anxious year of Revolution, when Father was at home on furlough—was no longer at the post he had held so faithfully. He had fallen in the fight, struck down by a deadly fever. How he was missed on the compound, by the students, the patients and his fellow-workers, and, above all, by his young wife and children ! Only one month later a good gift, a very good gift as it proved, had been given to the hospital in the coming of a Canadian girl who looked far too young and full of fun to be a doctor. But

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she was ; and her studies in Vienna, Glasgow and London, as well as in North America, had prepared her to do first-rate work.

Soon after she came to Kai-feng another gift was received, which was an answer to many prayers. In a beautiful home in America a little girl of about Pearl's age was living, whose parents loved the Lord Jesus and His work all over the world. They used to tell their little daughter about China and its children and how we can bring them light and happiness. She was very fond of books and pictures and was wise beyond her years, so when her father asked her one day whether she would not like to build a hospital in China with her own money—a nice, bright place where mothers and children could come when they were sick, and find loving care—she understood quite well. Yes, she said, she would like to do that very much. So the money was sent, and sent to Pearl's father, and in the garden where the children

Three Happy Years

played the workmen had been busy with the new buildings.

Before Victor came the Women's Hospital was completed, and the young Canadian doctor had her hands full of work. Another missionary had joined her as Matron, and the two were just like David and Jonathan. They had two Chinese helpers also, one of whom was called "Glory-Face," because she always looked so happy. Her work was to meet the poor sick women when they came, and to comfort them and talk to them about the Lord Jesus while they were waiting to see the doctor. Then in the hospital she used to go round the wards, making every one feel at home, teaching them to sing hymns if they were well enough, and to pray about their troubles. She had found such a precious Saviour herself in the Lord Jesus that she wanted every one else to find Him too.

It had been a wonderful thing to Mrs. Chang when she first heard of Jesus. No

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one would have called her "Glory-Face" at that time, for she had many troubles and no Comforter. A Mission for women was being held in the city, and a neighbour came to tell her about it.

"Suppose we go together to the Gospel Hall," she suggested, "and hear what they have to say."

The speaker, whose heart was very big and full of love, was telling that day about the father whose son had left him and gone to the "far country." She made it live before them, that matchless story, and pleaded with those who were far away from the one true God to leave the husks and swine and to come home—home to the Father's love. Mrs. Chang had never heard before of any God who loved people. The idols in the temples were all a terror to her, and she only burned incense to the household gods because she feared them. But this, how strange, how beautiful it seemed—a Father in heaven who loved her; a Saviour who had given His very

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life that her sins might be forgiven ! At the close of the meeting, when the speaker looked straight at her and said :

“ Do you understand ? Do you want to take your place in the family of God ? ” Mrs. Chang at once stood up and said earnestly :

“ I do not understand all you have been saying, but I know one thing : I know I have come Home to-day.”

But she was a heathen ; she had never heard before ; and the paper idols were still on the walls of her kitchen and guest-hall. Yes, but she went home that day to destroy her gods and tell her family that she believed in Jesus. After a year or more of steady growth as a Christian she was baptized, and so consistent was her life that, when a Biblewoman was needed in the hospital, the missionaries all agreed that no one better could be desired than Mrs. Glory-Face.

The other woman also, who did the work of a ward-maid, had found joy and peace

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in believing the very first time she ever heard of Jesus. She was poor and had lived a hard life, and like Mrs. Chang was ready for the message. It was the story of the Flood—God's judgement upon sin—and of the saving Ark that brought her light. Yes, a home for the one, a refuge for the other, they had found Him in whom alone is Salvation. But think of the thousands. the millions, who have never, never heard.

The children in the doctor's home, busy though they were with games and lessons, loved to do what they could to help in the great work. Singing for Mother's friends and in the wards had always been a favourite task. They had no fear of the sick people, and many a tired face would brighten as they went from bed to bed with their sweet songs and flowers. For the wealth of the garden was theirs to use in every way they could think of to give pleasure to others. Mother's vases were their special charge,

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and the little girls filled them every morning with the flowers Victor gathered, delighting to make all the house look fresh and gay. Then the rest were made up into nosegays for the hospital or Sunday School. This meant a good deal of work, for often they had sixty or eighty children in the waiting-room for women-patients—a clean, attractive place which was given up to them on Sundays. But the three kept bravely to their self-appointed task, Pearl especially—though only six or seven years old—realising that these were duties that had come to *her* and that she must not shirk them. While the elder ones were at lessons, Mother used to love to watch her little figure in its pink frock flitting among the rose-bushes, and to see the faithfulness with which she went about her preparations. In winter, when the flowers were gone, picture-cards took their place, or a packet of sweets for each child. Then when the time came, if Mother were delayed by visitors, her little helpers would go off all

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the more earnestly to begin the singing and talk with the children as they gave away their gifts.

No wonder the boys and girls from the crowded homes around them loved the Sunday School. Many were the texts and hymns they learned, and of course they could not but talk at home about all that was said and done. Parents became interested, and one family was entirely changed through the influence of the class upon a little girl. So anxious was she never to miss, that she put down a mark every day on the wall of the living-room and counted patiently till they came to seven—that was Sunday! Then she went off to the hospital, and came back full of all she had heard. Her father, seeing the child so happy in loving and serving the Lord, was persuaded to go with her to the nearest chapel, where he, too, could hear about Jesus. This resulted in his conversion and that of one or two other members of the family. So that fruit was



A CHINESE DINNER AT HOME

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Three Happy Years

found from the seed-sowing of the children,
even little Pearl, who loved to sing :

Jesus bids us shine with a pure, clear light,
Like a little candle burning in the night.
In this world is darkness, so we must shine,
You in your small corner and I in mine.

Up like a lark in the morning, Pearl's days were full of radiant happiness. She was always the first to run into Mother's room to waken her with kisses, and Victor was no sooner dressed than they were off to the garden or to care for their pets. But first they would sit down quietly while he read their daily portion—a few verses from the Bible—the bright heads close together as Pearl listened with keenest interest. She was keen about everything, lessons as well as play, and was so full of pluck and spirit that this brother was a companion after her own heart. The trio were inseparable and as often as not were up to mischief. But their governess understood them and had the happy faculty of controlling them without seeming to do so,

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while she entered into all their enjoyments. What right good times they had on the tennis court and croquet ground Father had made, and on the garden " golf links ! " The six holes were often buried by sandstorms in spring or lost in the snow in winter, but the children loved to dig them out, and hunted merrily in those impromptu bunkers for their balls.

Then the Snow Man they made year by year, how fine he looked on the open space in front of the house ! and not far away were the Monkey Gardens, a Chinese tea-house and pleasure resort that had many attractions. They loved to go there when the lotus was in flower, and the big blossoms dotted the lake while the great flat leaves seemed to float on the water. If only one could have sailed away on them like rafts among the lovely flowers ! Then there was the creaky little bridge, as exciting to cross as it was picturesque to look at, and round about were rockeries and tunnels, quite long ones, dark in the

Three Happy Years

middle. There were lots of birds and monkeys in cages, and best of all “ a tiger ” —which, however, proved to be only a painted calf led about by a patient dwarf ! But the monkeys were great sport when the children fed them with nuts and gave them a small round looking-glass to play with.

Best of all was the bicycle Father ordered from home—the little one that came with his big one and that even Pearl could ride. Though her feet barely touched the pedals she was all eagerness to learn as quickly as the others, and she did, with perhaps a little more help. To be in everything and to be “ in first ” was Pearl’s instinct, but she wanted everybody else to be “ in first ” too, and to have as good a time as she had. In her perfectly childish, natural way, she wanted above all else to be good and to please God.

“ How shall I please God ? ” she wrote on a scrap of paper one day. “ If I am obedient it will please God ; and if I am

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patient and unselfish and good, it will please God."

She was thinking as she grew older, and her heart turned to the best things as a flower to the sun. "Why I love Sunday," she wrote in answer to Mother's question. "On the seventh day God finished His work which He had made, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made" (Gen. ii. 2). "I love Sunday because it is unlike all other days. It is a more restful day. We have more time to read our Bibles and to pray. It is a day set apart wholly for God."

CHAPTER IV

SCHOOL DAYS AT CHEFOO

UNKNOWN to the children, a shadow was creeping over the hearts of their father and mother as those three precious years drew to a close. They had long foreseen the partings that must come when Joy and Victor and even little Pearl would have to leave that inland city, happy as their home had been, for school-life in a more bracing climate. They needed companionship with others of their own nationality, and needed to be removed from close contact with the degrading influences of heathenism. Then it was that, facing years of painful separation, the parents realised how good God had been to them as members of the China

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Inland Mission in preparing schools for their children, not far away on the other side of the world, but comparatively near at hand, so that the family circle could be reunited once in twelve months at any rate.

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Here, on the broad verandah of the Preparatory School at Chefoo, one is looking out upon the very scene that met their eyes that summer day when their vessel rounded the rocky promontory of The Bluff and they steamed for the first time into this beautiful harbour. For the schools are on the sea-shore—think of it!—right down by this long sweep of sandy beach, where the boat-houses and bathing-sheds suggest endless delights.

It was early on Sunday morning when they arrived—the little travellers from that far inland city—and their first experience, after going up to the Sanatorium in which they were to stay with Father and Mother, was the united service of the three schools, when all the boys and girls gathered with

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teachers, parents and visitors for a happy hour. They had no hall to meet in (a need that it is hoped will soon be supplied), but the boys' class-rooms could be thrown together, and when a number of the desks were taken out and chairs and forms crowded in, there was just room enough for everybody on ordinary occasions. The children from Honan gazed with wondering interest at those rows and rows of bright-faced boys and girls, all in white suits and dresses like themselves, and looking so happy ! How fine the singing was ! And the preaching—they could understand it all. But there was something deeper that they could not understand or even see, and that was the thankfulness that welled up in the hearts of their father and mother, and brought tears to their eyes, as they looked from the faces so dear to them round on that moving sight. For those boys and girls, and there were two to three hundred of them, had nearly all come from missionary homes and were separated from

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their parents, some of whom were months' journey away. And there, in place of those who had given them up for Jesus' sake, was the group of teachers—men and women who were forgoing the privilege of direct soul-winning among the heathen, the work for which they had come to China, that they might give their lives to teaching and training the children whom God had entrusted to the Mission. Little wonder the atmosphere of the schools was what it was, with so much of prayer and true devotion behind it. Happy, wholesome and helpful—the parents felt it more and more as they came into touch with the life of the schools that summer; but the children were taken up with quite other things.

How thrilling it was on Monday morning before breakfast to creep quietly out of the "San," run down by the "Prep" to the sea, and bathe for the first time! Having their governess with them—a much-loved companion—they could spend

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long hours on the shore, gathering shells and paddling or climbing the rocks. At low tide they could almost reach Bottle Rock, where the sea-gulls loved to rest, and there were fish and anemones in the pools, and many curious things among the slippery seaweed. To go rowing, too, with Father was a great delight, and there were picnics over at the Second Beach and family walks and bathes, when they found, to their delight, what a good swimmer Mother was.

Then came the great excitement of the year—the closing days of the summer term, when exhibitions of work were held in each of the schools, and the boys and girls gave entertainments and received their prizes. First the little folk had their day, and a lovely day it was ! Two of the class-rooms were laid out with specimens of writing and drawing, brushwork, modelling, knitting and other occupations of the children under ten years old, making Pearl feel quite eager to be among them.

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Better still were the singing and recitations, when the big schoolroom was crowded to overflowing with parents and friends. Her eyes sparkled and her heart beat fast as she listened and joined in the clapping. She had never seen prizes given away before, and bright visions rose before her of what might be next year if she worked well. But the musical drill out of doors was best of all, when a hundred or more little pupils of the "Prep" went through their marching, skipping and other charming exercises without prompting or guidance save from the piano. It almost took away her breath to see them all in white—the little girls with blue sashes and hair ribbons—moving so lightly through figure after figure of their drill, making a long arch with uplifted hands and then running through it, or keeping time to the music with coloured flags or dumb-bells. She could not imagine how they could do it so perfectly together, but she longed to be with them and learn her part, and

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felt sure she would be very happy at the 'Prep.'

The next day in the Girls' School and the next in the Boys' were more wonderful still. Even Father and Mother were stirred with surprise as they saw the work done through the term, and watched the grace and perfection with which the girls went through their drill and the smartness and strength exhibited by the boys. The crowds of admiring friends, the well-merited applause, the speeches and prize-givings amid the beautiful surroundings of gardens, hills and sea made a glowing impression on the children from Kai-feng, but their elders remembered longest the out-going groups from the upper schools, and the hush that fell upon boys and girls as those they had looked up to as prefects and leaders—captains, some of them, of cricket and boating clubs and winners of tennis tournaments and many prizes—came forward to receive "the leaving Bible" handed to each at the close of their

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school career. As they stood together, the girls in their schoolroom, the boys on their familiar "Quad," it could not but come over those young hearts that the scenes they had known and loved so well would welcome them back no more. Going out into life, as so many hundreds from the dear old schools before them, it was good to be encircled by the love and prayers they knew would follow them, of which the pocket Bibles they held in their hands would be a constant reminder.

Another memorable occasion was the Sunday morning down by the sea when a number of the boys and girls confessed their faith in Christ by baptism.¹ There were Chinese converts baptized as well, both men and women. The tide was

¹ Previous to these baptisms, a beautiful and impressive service had been held in St. Andrew's Church, when some of the pupils in the school whose parents were Anglicans had been confirmed by the Bishop of Shantung. This was before the arrival of the little family from Honan.

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going out as the large concourse gathered on the sands, the children and young people from the schools forming two wings of the big half-circle that reached right down to the water. In the open space in the middle the speakers stood, and hymns, prayers and addresses were in both languages. East and West certainly met under that sunny sky when the school-girls and Chinese women first, and afterwards the men and boys, went down into the sea and were baptized into the one and only Saviour. Father had been having a class to prepare the boys for this important step, and it was a joy to see them—eight bright earnest lads from the upper school—thus publicly take their stand as Christians. To Joy, Victor and Pearl it was all very beautiful. They liked, especially, the singing in English and Chinese at the same time of the familiar words,

Happy day, happy day, when Jesus washed my sins
away,

as each little group came up out of the

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water, and to see the school girls helping the Chinese women who had been baptized with them, taking their hands and leading them safely back to the shore.

After that the holidays sped all too fast ! When the schools broke up for a month, the boys and girls who had parents at the "San " were able to be with them a great deal, and others whose families had come to Chefoo for the summer went to stay in the Missionary Home or in private houses, but the great majority remained on under the care of their teachers. This meant more of a holiday for the young people than for the members of the staff, for the daily routine had to be carried on, lessons excepted, bathing and boating had to be supervised, and the " Prepites " needed even more watchful care than during the term. At Christmas time the holidays were longer and permitted most of the children to go home, but August was too hot for travelling, and teachers and

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children alike were thankful to be near the sea.

One great event for the boys especially was the "two-mile swim," when they went in boats to the pier, out of sight on the Second Beach, and swam back past the schools and right on to Consulate Hill in the Settlement. They were followed by boats, and had hot coffee waiting for them at the end, and felt they had made good their claim to attempt the swim from The Bluff some day. But that was almost twice as far, and was rarely permitted.

The Honan picnic was another delightful outing, several missionary families from that province making up a large party and going by launch across the Bay to the islands behind which the sun rises. The chief attraction was the lighthouse—the white building they could see from the schools with that wonderful light they watched all the year round. It was quite an experience to make friends with the lighthouse keeper, a lonely man, a Norwegian, and so clean

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that he whitewashed even the pebbles, and always seemed to be painting some part of his spotless premises.

The school-beach, however, was the great attraction. There the "Prepites" played barefoot in the sand for hours, and loved to finish up at night with supper on the wall and steps of their playground, facing the open sea. There the boys swam out to their "raft" with its high stand for diving, and the girls to their corresponding "tea-tray." There the boats were always ready, from the *Hero* and the *Leander*—big racing boats of the Boys' School—down to the canoes and punts that made such fun for bathers. What good cover they afforded for a game of "I spy" on summer evenings! And was the beach ever more attractive than on moonlight nights after the long hot day? Not that Pearl, or even Joy and Victor, came in for moonlight bathes. Their days began and ended early and were full of happy companionships, initiating them

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more and more into the sayings and doings of the little world of which they were to become a part.

Very quickly, as it seemed, the time came when Father and Mother had to go back to the great city near the Yellow River—with what lonely hearts the children little guessed—and Joy and Victor and Pearl were left, one in each of the schools. It rained just then a good deal, and the children were parting too from their governess, who had joined the Mission and was going into Chinese work. She stayed with them to the last, after Father and Mother were gone, and wrote of one great cheer—Pearl's joyous little face as she went off to the "Prep" so brightly, saying :

"It's all right ! I know I shall be happy."

And happy indeed she was from the first among her new-found friends. School-life meant work as well as play, even for the little ones, but Pearl loved work, and entered heart and soul into her lessons.

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She loved play too, and was quick to see how to make things nice for others. She was never so happy as when helping somebody else, and it was not long till the girls in her bedroom and the pupils in her form began to like her in quite a special way. No one could help being drawn to the sweet sunny-faced child who lived so completely out of herself and was such good company !

But though friends were many in her new life, Pearl looked forward to the long walk home from church on Sundays when she could be with her brother and sister. For in addition to their own school service, the children attended either St. Andrew's or the Union Church in the Settlement, a mile and a half away. Then on the way back brothers and sisters might walk together and talk to their hearts' content. This the three did, sharing their letters from home and all their school experiences. Sometimes they had to take the inner road as the months wore on, and autumn winds

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sent the big waves rolling up the beach and over the Bund. The dry air and brilliant sunshine kept it from being too cold, even when winter came, and the sand froze and the waves froze, so that sometimes the children could play right out on the frozen foam. Double windows were needed all along the broad verandahs of the "Prep" in those days, and the covered-way to the schoolrooms at one end and the dining-room at the other had to be glazed in. But lessons and games went on just the same. Pearl steadily worked her way upward. Though only eight years old, she gained seventeen places in her class, and her form mistress was able to report that she had made "splendid progress."

Everybody loved her and felt her influence for good. "Pearl's little face was an inspiration," recalled one of her teachers, thinking specially of the quiet moments after tea, when the children kept their places round the tables for evening prayers. But perhaps it was her music-teacher who knew

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most of the child's inner life, for on the cover of the note-book in which the gist of her music lessons was carefully recorded the little hand had written :

“ We will make it our aim to be well pleasing unto Him.”

CHAPTER V

THE TREASURED SECRET

THEY had counted the weeks, the days and almost the hours, and now at last the wonderful joy had come—they were home for the holidays ! The long journey over, first by steamer then by train, they were back on the wide plains of Honan, back in the garden behind the hospital, back at their own fireside. Little wonder Pearl was radiant, rejoicing, overflowing with love—quite unconscious that she was astonishing everybody by her development in one short term !

It was a cold winter with lots of snow, and the children found a delightful companion in the young missionary who, with special training as a chemist, had come

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to help in the business management of the hospital. When he could spare time to go skating or sledging, what a merry party they were on the moat, or running up and sliding down the broad ascent to the city wall ! Then there was toffee-making with their little friends in the city, school-fellows who had returned with them from Chefoo. And books, books ! When the lamps were lighted in the evening and Mother had time to play games or read aloud, how they all enjoyed it, in the cosy corner by the fire !

Pearl was a great reader, and sometimes dipped into things that were beyond her years. Seeing her with a book for an older girl one day, Mother said :

“ That is a love-story, Darling ; I do not think you will understand it.”

“ Oh, I *like* love-stories, Mother,” was the surprising answer ; and then, turning to a picture of some people who looked very happy together, “ Are these the loving ones ?



A REAL MISCHIEF !

Pearl at six years old

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What a loving one she was herself !
With her arms round Mother's neck one evening she said thoughtfully :

“ Do you think the Lord minds, Mother, if I love you more than Him ? ”

“ Well, you can *see* me, can't you ? ”
was the wise reply.

“ Yes, I can see you—that makes it so easy ! ”

The Bible was the book she loved above all others ; and the evening hour when Mother came up to read and pray with them before they went to sleep was looked forward to by all three with special delight. Mother had always done this, and no one could tell Bible stories or make it all so real and beautiful as she could.

Then there was the Bible Searching Almanac, which was a great help in coming to know the Word of God for themselves. A text was given for every day, the chapter and verse of which had to be found. Only the name of the book was supplied, and it often meant patient search to discover the

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passage, but the children loved doing it, and Pearl did not tire as the months went on. Often she was to be seen poring over her Bible, reading chapter after chapter to find the special text, and then she would go to bed so happily when her search was rewarded.

But one night, strange to say, Pearl was not happy. Mother had left her with a good-night kiss as usual, wondering at the question her little girl had asked :

“ Mother, how can we *know* that our names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life ? ”

The sweet voice had sounded troubled, and half an hour later Victor came down to say that Pearl was crying.

Pearl—always so bright and happy ! What could be the matter ?

“ It's about the name, Mother,” she sobbed. “ It's about the name. I can't go to sleep unless I *know*.”

She had been reading in Revelation, and

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the beauty of the heavenly city filled her heart. But it said so distinctly : “ There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, or he that maketh an abomination and a lie, but *only they which are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life* ” (Rev. xxi. 27). Mother’s name was written there, and Father’s, and those of many whom she loved But Pearl’s name—— ? She had never really thought about it before. How could she know, oh, how could she be sure that her name was written there ?

Wrapping her up warmly, Mother carried the troubled child to her own room and sat down to talk over the matter. The Spirit of God was moving, she could see, in this little heart, and He would give the light that alone could make it plain.

It was not about anything Pearl could do, that Mother talked to her, but about what the Lord Jesus had done. When He bore all our sins on the dreadful cross, and cried aloud in the darkness, “ It is finished,”

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did not that mean that everything was finished that was needed for our salvation ? Is He not “ the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world ” ? When we give our hearts to Him, He washes them whiter than snow ; and He writes the names of all His own, all who trust Him, in the Book of Life.

“ To have your name written there, Darling, you do not need to weep and pray, but only to trust Jesus. As soon as you first began to love Him, He put your name in His book, and all you have to do—all that any one can do—is just to praise Him for it. Do you not want to kneel down now with Mother and thank Him for having done this for you ? ”

Oh yes ! that was just what Pearl wanted. She did love and trust Jesus, and she was so glad to understand that He really had written her name in His Book of Life. Yes, she would thank Him for it, and gladly give herself afresh to Him.

“ And now, Darling,” Mother said when

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they had prayed together, "I want to give you a text to rest your heart on." Mother knew that even for little children it is *what God says* that brings strength and help. "Here it is—part of the first verse of Isaiah 43"—and Mother read :

"Fear not, for I have redeemed thee ; I have called thee by thy name, thou art Mine."

Eagerly Pearl listened, and repeated the words again and again. How sweet, how wonderful they were ! Jesus knew her name ; was calling her by her name. He had redeemed her. Her name must be in the Book of Life, for He said, "thou art Mine."

Very happily, then, and peacefully she went to sleep in the little camp-bed Mother had made up beside her own. Isaiah xliii. 1 was her pillow. The precious words had so taken hold of her heart that she repeated them again and again after she was tucked up and Mother had said Good-night. Then in the morning it all

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came back with a new flood of joy. She wanted to read the words again, and borrowed Mother's Bible with references that she might find other passages that said the same thing—"thou art Mine." She was quite busy over it, turning to place after place and writing out the verses. And her little face was bright with a wonderfully sweet and tender light.

Nor was this all. A day or two later she was busy again for quite a long time. She had brought out one of her treasures, a small, red leather pocket-book, and was bending over it writing something that seemed to be of great importance. She did not show it to Mother, though she smiled at her across the table. Apparently it was a secret. But secrets were in the air just then, so near Christmas-time, and Mother asked no questions.

Was there ever a Christmas like that one—its hours full-freighted with happiness from morning till night? Wakened long before daylight by the carol-singers, students

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from the hospital, the children had a glorious time over their "stockings." Then came a wonderful breakfast-table, laden with presents; visits to the bright wards of the hospital; a service in the decorated chapel; Christmas dinner and an afternoon of games and rest; and finally the Christmas-tree, lighted at evening, when their school-fellows came from the city and the hospital-staff from the other homes on the compound.

Their special friend in charge of the dispensary helped the children, a few days later, to prepare an entertainment for the grown-ups, which included a charade. This was called, *A Chapter in a Doctor's Life*, and was given in four scenes. Pearl was not well at the time, but she entered into it all with the keenest zest, and made a charming patient, lying in bed, her face dimpling with amusement and finally wreathed in smiles.

The New Year found her still poorly, though she was busy as usual—knitting

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little cuffs for the children of the Sunday School and enjoying quiet reading and games. Father was watching his little girlie anxiously, and when the pain became worse and her temperature went up he decided with the other doctors that there must be an operation. The clever young surgeon who had come to take the place of Father's first colleague was Pearl's great friend. He would do the operation with help from the lady-doctor, and Pearl was not the least afraid. As a little thing she had always been brave, and held her head up steadily through whatever came, and now she seemed to be thinking more of others than herself.

"I shall soon come back," she said, looking so sweet and bright as they wrapped her up to carry her over to the hospital. And as she crossed the garden in the frosty air and sunshine, she called back :

"I like it, Mother ; I like it !"

When the chloroform had to be given she knew no fear. "It's all right, Father,"

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she said trustfully, as he explained what he was doing. And she breathed it in with perfect quietness, and went to sleep.

Skilfully the operation was performed and the little patient tended, and Father hoped against hope that his precious child would recover. Things were very serious—but surely, surely that life so full of promise could not be near its close. But the Lord loved little Pearl better even than Father could or Mother, and He saw that it was best to take her to the Home above.

It had come so suddenly that the mother was almost stricken down with grief. Pearl lay still and silent—the dancing feet and willing hands no longer busy, the shining eyes closed, the loving lips without a word. Oh, if only her Darling could speak to her once more! If only Mother could know what was passing in the soul that was as her own soul. Would no word

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come to her ? Would no crumb of comfort be given ?

And then she remembered — Pearl's secret. Rising from the bedside she went to find the pocket-book on which, now, her hopes were centred. There it was, safely put away among other treasures, and opening it Mother found in childish writing just the message her heart needed. Her little one was speaking to her from the borders of the Better Land. She read and read again, with tears of thankfulness :

“ Pearl gave her heart to the Lord on December 14, 1918, aged eight years. Her text was—‘ Fear not, for I have redeemed thee ; I have called thee by thy name, thou art Mine.’

Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me,
Bless Thy little Lamb to-night ;
Through the darkness be Thou near me
Keep me safe till morning light.”

The night was dark—but not for little Pearl. For her the morning light was

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dawning, and all the wonderful, sweet
meaning of her secret.

The tender Shepherd bears each lamb
O'er rock and waste and wild.
The object of His love I am,
And carried like a child.

CHAPTER VI

IS IT YOUR SECRET TOO ?

“GONE from us—gone to be with Him,” her father wrote a few days later. “Our precious little Pearl—that radiant soul! how can I tell you all that she was? Though only eight years old she raised a standard we would do well to follow. Her high sense of honour and truth, the diligence and thoroughness with which she did everything, the order and neatness of her work, her thoughtfulness and intelligence and her unvarying faithfulness gave promise of a future of more than ordinary usefulness. Gifted and beautiful—lovely in person, in mind and in heart—she was nevertheless unconscious of it all. She radiated love, always and

Is it your Secret too?

everywhere. Can you imagine how the heart of her mother was satisfied in her love? They fitted being into being, the one a counterpart of the other. As flower to sun, so did Pearl turn to her mother; and when we went out, with Father on one side and Mother on the other, she would dance for joy and gladness."

"Her little life was so fragrant at school," wrote one who loved her there; and another recalled her thoughtfulness and care for others. "She delighted to help those in the school who were smaller than herself, and was always eager to do all in her power for the teachers. I cannot tell you how we shall miss her Christlike influence as well as her bright presence."

That little life of eight short years had done its work, or, seeing what we now see, may we not say it has entered, rather, upon wider usefulness, as it has entered upon more perfect happiness? For Pearl is touching homes and hearts and lands she never could have reached if she had stayed

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with us. Lying before the writer, for example, is a sheaf of papers that tell a precious story. Some are written in pencil, some with brush and ink, and all on Chinese paper in the curious characters that mean so much. Some come from the borders of Mongolia, far north of the Great Wall, some from towns and cities in the province of Shan-si, especially from the district in which Pastor Hsi did his life-work. And what have they to do with little Pearl? She never went up there. No, but some one did to whom she was very dear—some one who is writing these pages—and in many places where there were schools and orphanages she told the story of how little Pearl gave her heart to the Lord. Then she asked the boys and girls who listened, listened as if they could never hear enough, whether they too would not like to be sure, quite sure, that their names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Do you want to hear some of the answers?

Is it your Secret too?

From these two hundred and more slips of paper let us take a few and read them here on the upper verandah of the school Pearl loved. This big room behind us was her room. Yonder, with its white mosquito netting, is the little bed she slept in. And over the blue sea, washing up so quietly on the beach below, stretches the infinite blue of heaven—telling of that far better happier Land that she has entered. And here are the decisions recorded by many a young heart that has taken the step Pearl took and has learned the blessedness of her secret.

“On June the sixth,” writes a dear girl of thirteen, “I handed over my heart to the Lord. I feel my sins to be very great. The Lord can wash them all away with His precious blood. I trust the Lord will never leave me. Please pray for me, honoured Friend.”

“From this eighth day of the fifth month,” is the record of a girl of seventeen,

薩拉齊曹守德十三歲六月初六日定志將
身心都歸主叫主用因主用自己的血贖
了我望主永遠不丟棄我主曹向我施大
恩典求師娘為我禱告求聖靈為幫助
我叫我能作个光在世

FACSIMILE OF THE SLIP WRITTEN BY STEADFAST
VIRTUE, RECORDING HER DECISION

(For translation see opposite page.)

Is it your Secret too?

“ my purpose is settled to follow the Lord. I desire to have fellowship with Him, and to leave all that is sinful. Please pray for me.”

“ On the sixth day of the sixth month, Steadfast Virtue settled her purpose to give body and soul to the Lord Jesus, for His service. Seeing the Lord has redeemed me by His blood, I trust He will never leave me. The Lord has already shown me great mercy. Please pray the Holy Spirit to help me and enable me to be a light in the world.”

“ Mary, aged thirteen, gave her heart to the Lord on June 6. Please, Lord, always be King in my life. Forever fill my heart, that I may be Thy child. ‘ I trust you shall know that we are not reprobates. We pray God that even one wicked thing He will not allow us to do ’ (2 Cor. xiii. 6, 7).”

“ Determined to give body and soul to the Lord,” writes another child of twelve

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“Please pray the Heavenly Father to enable me all my life to walk in faithfulness.”

And one of sixteen, an earnest girl from the mountains, records: “Under the Holy Spirit’s influence, I was enabled to repent and believe in the Lord. I desire to be one whom the Lord can use.”

“Whether for life or death,” wrote one of the same age—so weak that she could only make a little cross on the paper—“I determine on this sixth day of June to be the Lord’s.”

“Branch of Grace willingly gives her whole heart to the Lord,” is yet another. “Write my name, Lord, I pray, in Thy book, that at Thy coming Thou mayest receive me to heaven. The Lord said to those who trust Him, ‘I go to prepare a place for you.’”

“Please pray for your scholar who willingly gives his whole heart and life to the Lord,” writes a boy of eighteen from Pastor Hsi’s old station.

Is it your Secret too?

“ This ninth year of the Republic, the second month and twenty-seventh day at 3 P.M.,” wrote a class-mate, “ I came under the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit. My purpose is fixed whether for life or death, for honour or contempt (persecution) to give my whole life to the Lord. Please pray for me.”

An older lad in the same school writes :
“ Most willingly I give my whole life to serve the Lord, offering to Him my body and soul. I beseech the Lord Most High to bestow upon me His Holy Spirit that my heart may be washed clean from all defilement. Please pray for me that I may receive the Lord’s blessing. This is my supreme desire.”

“ Star of Dawn, aged thirteen, obtained comfort of the Lord on June 6, and gladly hands over her heart to the Lord in repentance. Please pray for me. Thank you.”

And Strong Root “ truly determines to

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give her whole heart to the Lord and not to go on sinning. She trusts the Lord will help her, for He has said : ' I want people to come to Me, and certainly will have ways to help.' I am only fifteen and might very easily backslide. Please pray for me that my faith may be strengthened. I am full of happiness."

Dear Reader, young or old, do you know the joy that filled these hearts? Have you too a record such as theirs? If you have never decided definitely to love and serve the Lord Jesus, will you not do so now, before you close this book? Ask Him, as these boys and girls have done, to give you His Holy Spirit that your heart may be cleansed from all sin. Praise Him that He does do it. Oh, kneel down and thank Him, as Pearl did, that He writes your name too in His Book of Life. And hear Him say to you to-day, with the same mighty love :

" Fear not, for I have redeemed thee ; I

Is it your Secret too?

have called thee by thy name : *thou art Mine.*”

There is a city bright ;
Closed are its gates to sin ;
Nought that defileth,
Nought that defileth
Can ever enter in.

Saviour, I come to Thee ;
O Lamb of God, I pray,
Cleanse me and save me,
Cleanse me and save me,
Wash all my sins away.

Lord, make me, from this hour,
Thy loving child to be,
Kept by Thy power,
Kept by Thy power
From all that grieveth Thee, -

Till in the snow-white dress
Of Thy redeemed I stand,
Faultless and stainless,
Faultless and stainless,
Safe in that happy land.